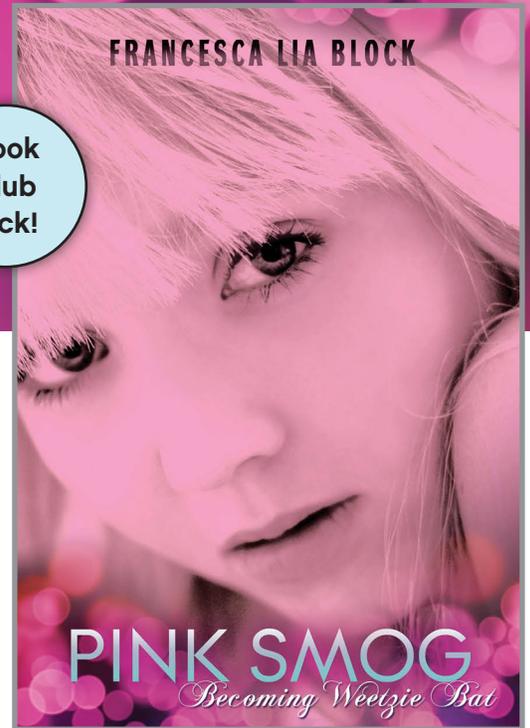


PINK SMOG

Becoming Weetzie Bat

by FRANCESCA LIA BLOCK

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Book
Club
Pick!

About the Book

From Francesca Lia Block comes the long-awaited prequel to *Weetzie Bat*. Despite how much Louise insists, no one will call her Weetzie. It's her dad's nickname for her, but it won't stay put. Neither will her dad. Charlie left Louise and her mom and he took everything with him: her family, her home—and her understanding of who she's meant to be. But Los Angeles is a city full of strange angels, and Louise embarks on a journey to sift through the smog of her heartbreak, to grow her own wings, to become Weetzie.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it so important to Louise for people to call her Weetzie? Does a person's name change the way you think about them?
2. Throughout her story, Marilyn Monroe is a source of beauty and inspiration to Weetzie. Yet at the end of the book, Weetzie says, "I would never be like her and I didn't even really want to be" (p. 178). Why does she say this about someone she admires?
3. Weetzie finds her friends Bobby and Lily through the shared experience of being outcasts at school (p. 63). Is there a bright side to kids forming cliques at school?
4. If you were Weetzie, how would you respond to Staci's bullying? Would you ignore it, like Weetzie, or would you try to fight back?
5. Even the pretty, popular Staci falls victim to the gossip and graffiti at Weetzie's school (p. 102). Now that she knows what it's like, do you think Staci feels guilty about treating Weetzie and her friends this way? Why or why not?
6. From Bobby and Lily to Winter, Weetzie's friends have troubled relationships with their families. As Winter says, "You just have to make your own family, your own life" (p. 89). Since these characters can't rely on their families, does having to take care of themselves make them stronger?
7. When her father visits, Weetzie decides not to confront him with serious questions because she "realized that it would only make things harder when he left" (p. 148). If you were Weetzie, what would you have done?
8. Weetzie struggles to learn to live in the moment. Winter says "You've got to see the beauty whenever you can and take what you can get. Otherwise you just get old" (p. 90). What does Winter mean by "getting old"? Do you think kids can do this better than adults?
9. Weetzie decorates a T-shirt and jeans with a cut-up old dress, as "a way to remember and forget at the same time" (p. 61). She spends a lot of time making and embellishing her own clothes. How does what people wear affect their behavior? Does clothing change the way people think about themselves?
10. Charlie Bat hates Los Angeles, but Weetzie says, "In a way, L.A. was me" (p. 33), and she loves it despite the smog. What does she mean by this? Would Weetzie be the same person without L.A.?